

## INCLUSION AND THE ROLE OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

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**Abstract:** By the means of this case study we aimed to demonstrate how inclusion in general schools promotes the development of children with special needs. For this purpose a case of inclusion of a child with cerebral palsy in the general pre-school classroom, which implements the Step by Step program in Latvia, was investigated. The main concepts of the case study are 1) inclusive education and 2) parent involvement, where parent involvement is an indispensable component of inclusive education. Results of the case study are summarized in this article. Analysis of the experience testifies that participation in Step by Step Parent Education program helped parents to get free of stereotypes, and convinced them that inclusion in general schools is possible for their child with special needs. Parents' active involvement in their children learning, which was stimulated by parent education program, promoted social, emotional and cognitive development of their child.

**Keywords:** inclusive education, children with special needs, inclusion, parent involvement